

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

DEAE-00 IO-13 JUSE-00 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 SCI-06

OMB-01 AID-20 HEW-08 IGA-02 RSR-01 /144 W

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R 060951Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9671

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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3.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, PK, IN, AF

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS CONTROL: LACK OF PROGRESS IN PUNJAB

REF: ISLAMABAD 1498, 4965, 4933; LAHORE 0862

BEGIN SUMMARY: FOLLOWING FLURRY OF ARTICLES IN VARIOUS PAKISTANI NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES ON THE SMUGGLING PROBLEM AND NARCOTICS ABUSE IN PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, CONGEN OFFICER WITH NARCOTICS RESPONSIBILITY CHECKED SEVERAL SOURCES TO SEE IF SOME NEW PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES WERE UNDER WAY. OVERALL IMPRESSION FOLLOWING TALKS WITH IG OF POLICE, HIS NEWLY APPOINTED DIG FROM CRIME, WITH NEWLY APPOINTED IG OF WEST PAKISTAN RANGERS, AND WITH SECRETARY FOR EXCISE AND TAXATION, IS THAT ALTHOUGH SMUGGLING HAS BECOME ITEM OF SERIOUS IMPORTANCE TO GOVERNOR KHAR AND

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT, IT IS SMUGGLING OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES THAT IS CONCERN, NOT NARCOTICS, AND THAT SINCE 27 APRIL
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MEETING OF CENTRAL NARCOTICS BOARD, LITTLE OR NOTHING

HAS BEEN HEARD FROM ISLAMABAD ON THE SUBJECT OF NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT OR CONTROL. POLICE AND EXCISE AND TAXATION (E AND T) SEEM IN BATTLE, POSSIBLY OVER CONTROL OF PROMISED AID FOR NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT UNITS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON 20 JULY 1973 PAK TIMES RAN ARTICLE ANNOUNCING APPOINTMENT OF SSP ASGHAR KHAN AS GOVERNOR KHAR'S CHOICE TO HEAD "ROUND-THE-CLOCK-MARATHON" CAMPAIGN TO STOP DU SMUGGLING IN PUNJAB. ARTICLE WENT ON TO SAY THAT SSP KHAN WOULD BE GIVEN JEEPS AND ADEQUATE STAFF TO COPE WITH PROBLEM. 23 JULY ISSUE OF DAWN RAN LEAD EDITORIAL, "WHO ARE THE SMUGGLERS", PRAISING KHAR FOR INITIATING ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN. IN NEITHER ARTICLE WAS NARCOTICS IDENTIFIED AS EVEN POSSIBLE TARGET OF CAMPAIGN. THEN ON 27 JULY, PAK TIMES RAN EDITORIAL ON "DRUG MENACE" IN WHICH IT POINTED OUT FABULOUS PROFITS MADE BY DRUG SMUGGLERS, ADDICT PROBLEM AND PROBLEMS OF CONTROL, WHILE PRAISING STEPS TAKEN BY NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD (NCB) TO CONTROL TRAFFIC IN ILLEGAL DRUGS, AND TO ERADICATE DRUG ADDICTION. FINALLY, INTERESTING ARTICLE APPEARED 26 JULY IN LAHORE'S NEW PPP URDU DAILY, SIASAT, WHICH DESCRIBED HOW LEGAL OPIUM SHOPS ALSO MAKE AVAILABLE ILLEGAL INTOXICANTS SUCH AS CHARAS (HASHISH), LIQUOR, COCAINE AND GANJA IN OPEN VIOLATION OF LAW. ARTICLE WENT ON TO SLAM EXCISE DEPARTMENT FOR FAILURE TO ENFORCE LAWS, IN FACT, ACCUSING EXCISE INSPECTORS OF COOPERATING WITH LEGAL OPIUM VENDORS IN THESE AND OTHER ABUSES OF LAW, AND APOLOGIZING FOR POLICE WHO HAVE NO POWER TO MAKE RAIDS ON THESE PLACES. ARTICLE ALSO STATED THAT IN LAHORE, ABOUT 40 PERCENT OF LICENSED VENDING SHOPS FOR OPIUM ARE "OWNED" INDIRECTLY BY EXCISE MEN.

2. PROMPTED BY THESE AND OTHER STORIES ON SEIZURES OF CHARAS, CONGEN CONTACTED SEVERAL SOURCES TO DETERMINE IF ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN IS TO INCLUDE NARCOTICS, POSSIBLY AS RESULT NEW NCB URGINGS AND DECISIONS RE ENFORCEMENT. WE UNABLE GET HOLD OF SSP ASGHAR KHAN AS HE VERY BUSY SETTING UP HIS ANTI-SMUGGLING FORCE WHICH WILL BE RUN DIRECTLY OUT OF GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, BUT IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TALKS WITH IG POLICE SAHIBZADA RAUF ALI AND DIG FOR CRIMES, SAGHIR HUSSAIN, THEY REVEALED THAT ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN CONCERNED ONLY WITH "ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES" SUCH AS FERTILIZER, SUGAR, WHEAT, ETC., AND IS TO DEAL ONLY WITH INTRA-PROVINCIAL OPERATIONS, NOT INTERNATIONAL SMUGGLING, AND THAT NARCOTICS WAS NOT UNDER CONSIDERATION AS POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL TARGET. NO SUGGESTION OF LIAISON BETWEEN SAGHIR AND KHAN HAS

BEEN RAISED UNTIL CONGEN OFFICER SUGGESTED THAT INTELLIGENCE KHAN MIGHT GATHER ON COMMODITIES SMUGGLERS MIGHT BE OF HELP TO SAGHIR IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT SPHERE. LATER, IN SEPARATE TALK WITH SAGHIR, /2#9 43:3,5)6 43:38;3\$ TRAINING AT INTERNATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY IN WASHINGTON, HE REVEALED THAT SINCE TAKING OVER AS DIG CRIMES BRANCH HE HAD HEARD NOTHING AT ALL ABOUT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO STEM NARCOTICS TRAFFIC, AND HAD IN FACT ONLY READ FILE ON IT FOLLOWING MEETING PREVIOUS DAY WITH CONGEN OFFICER AND IG. SAGHIR QUITE CANDID IN SAYING PROVINCIAL POLICE HAD HEARD NOTHING FURTHER FROM NCB IN ISLAMABAD ON SUBJECT OF NARCOTICS SINCE RECEIVING MINUTES OF MEETING HELD APRIL 27 IN ISLAMABAD IN WHICH SOME PROVINCIAL POLICE OFFICERS PARTICIPATED.

3. ASKED IF HE WAS AWARE THAT NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE BEEN TURNED OVER FROM E AND T TO POLICE, SAGHIR RESPONDED BY READING US SECTION FROM MINUTES OF MEETING IN FILE TO EFFECT THAT WHEN SUBJECT BROUGHT UP, GREAT DISCUSSION AND DEBATE ENSUED WHICH ENDED IN RESOLUTION TO PUT OFF DECISION UNTIL "LATER DATE" FOLLOWING SOLICITATION OF ADVICE FROM PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS. SAGHIR ADDED THAT PUNJAB GOVERNMENT STILL WAITING TO BE SOLICITED. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID PUNJAB POLICE HAD SUBMITTED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPOSITION OF FIELD INSPECTION UNITS (FIU), AND PLAN HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM ISLAMABAD ACCOUNTING FOR ABOUT 22 FIELD UNITS COUNTRY-WIDE WHICH DETAILED EQUIPMENT FOR EACH. UNITS TO BE MADE UP FROM PERSONNEL FROM POLICE (TWO UNITS FROM PUNJAB), AND OTHERS, NOT RPT NOT INCLUDING WEST PAKISTAN RANGERS.

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OMB-01 AID-20 HEW-08 IGA-02 RSR-01 /144 W

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R 060951Z AUG 73
FM AMCONSUL LAHORE
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4. SAGHIR SAID HE THOUGHT NCB WOULD HAVE OVERALL COORDINATING CONTROL OF UNITS, BUT THAT INDIVIDUAL PROVINCIAL ORGANS WOULD RETAIN OPERATIONAL DIRECTION. SO FAR, HOWEVER, SAGHIR SAID HE HAD HAD NO REQUEST TO SELECT INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS TO MAN UNITS, AND HE NOTED THAT TRAINING WOULD BE NEEDED. HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY ACTION IN NEAR FUTURE. HE ALSO SAID IN REPLY TO SUGGESTION MADE EARLIER THAT IN MEAN-TIME HE LIAISE WITH NEWLY FORMED ANTI-SMUGGLING GROUP UNDER KHAN, THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIGHER UP TO DO THIS, AND THEN WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN LEGAL AUTHORITY SINCE KHAN'S UNIT NOT UNDER SUPER-VISION OF POLICE, BUT RUN OUT OF GOVERNOR'S OFFICE.

5. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION OF NARCOTICS PROBLEM WHICH SAGHIR DOES NOT REGARD AS SERIOUS IN PUNJAB, AND BASICALLY BELIEVES IS U.S. INTERNAL MATTER WHICH NEEDS BE DEALT WITH MORE EFFECTIVELY THERE, SAGHIR NEVERTHELESS CRITICAL OF E AND T FAILURE BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN CARRYING OUT ITS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHARTER TO ENFORCE NARCOTICS LAWS IN PAKISTAN. AT ONE POINT HE HINTED ENTIRE E AND T SIMPLY NOT INTERESTED, AND SAID THEY OFTEN REFUSED GET INVOLVED WHEN, ON OCCASION, POLICE MADE SEIZURE OF ILLICIT DRUGS. THIS, PLUS REMARKS MADE BY ABDUL WAHID, SECRETARY E AND T, LEAD US BELIEVE THERE LIVELY BATTLE GOING ON BETWEEN THESE TWO AGENCIES, POSSIBLY OVER SHARE OF ANY AID FORTHCOMING FROM U.S. ENFORCEMENT EFFORT, AND MAY ALSO BE BEHIND SIASAT ARTICLE.

6. EARLIER, IG POLICE ALSI ALSO DOWNPLAYED SIGNIFICANCE ANY NARCOTICS SMUGGLING IN OR THROUGH PUNJAB, AND BALDLY STATED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE ANY OPIUM BEING SMUGGLED TO INDIA FOR ONWARD SHIPPING VIA BOMBAY OR CALCUTTA TO HONG KONG OR ELSEWHERE, NOR EVEN THROUGH PUNJAB TO KARACHI. HE ALLOWED SOMEWHAT INCONSISTENTLY, HOWEVER, THAT PERHAPS SOME DID GO TO INDIA FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION, BUT JOKED THAT HE ENCOURAGED THIS AS MEANS DEBILITATING ENEMY. HE ALSO SAID THERE NO NEW EFFORTS

TO COORDINATE POLICE EFFORTS WITH THOSE OF WEST PAKISTAN RANGERS (WPR), WHICH LARGELY DISAGREES WITH WHAT WE TOLD BY NEWLY APPOINTED IG OF WPR, BRIGADIER MUMTAZ ALI. ALI TOOK OVER ABOUT ONE MONTH AGO, AND IS OBVIOUSLY WELL BRIEFED AND SEEMED INTERESTED IN DOING SOMETHING ABOUT POSSIBLE INCREASE OF NARCOTICS SMUGGLING ACROSS INDO-PAK BORDER. HE POINTED OUT PROBLEM HE HAS IN PATROLLING SUCH VAST OPEN BORDER AGAINST ARMED SMUGGLERS WHO WILLING SHOOT IT OUT, AND WHO WHEN CAUGHT ARE UNABLE OR UNWILLING PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION ON ORIGINS OR DESTINATIONS OF SHIPMENTS. HE ALSO CONCERNED THAT SMUGGLING OF NARCOTICS HAD INCREASED DUE TO WITHDRAWAL OF ARMY FROM BORDER POSITIONS; MORE LIBERAL IMPORT LAWS ON SOME ITEMS TRADITIONALLY SMUGGLED FROM INDIA, AND RISE IN PRICES OF SOME COMMODITIES IN PAKISTAN, SUCH AS WHEAT, WOULD REDUCE SMUGGLERS INCOME FROM THESE ITEMS. STILL, HE SAID, HE TOO HAD HEARD NOTHING FROM ISLAMABAD IN REPLY TO HIS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEN AND EQUIPMENT TO FORM MOBILE ANTI-NARCOTICS SMUGGLING UNITS, AND ASKED CONGEN OFFICER IF HE COULD FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM. HE SAID HE DOES HAVE SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE MEN WHO ATTEMPT TO LEARN OF PLANNED MOVEMENTS ACROSS BORDER, AND DOES COORDINATE ACTIVITIES WITH PUNJAB POLICE, BUT TASK EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT DUE RISKS AND MONEY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INVOLVED. HE CLAIMED SEIZURE OF SOME SEVEN MAUNDS OF OPIUM SO FAR THIS YEAR AGAINST NONE PREVIOUS YEAR.

7. CHAUDRI ABDUL WAHID, E AND T SECRETARY, ALSO REMARKED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO MOVEMENT TOWARD TIGHTENING EFFORTS TO ENFORCE NARCOTICS LAWS OR TO IMPROVE INTERDICTION EFFORTS. HE CRITICAL OF PEOPLE NAMED TO NCB AS NOT HAVING NEEDED EXPERTISE IN FIELD, AND SAID ONLY COMMUNICATION HE HAD FROM THEM RECENTLY WAS RECEIVED ABOUT 10 DAYS PRIOR TO OUR OWN REQUEST (SEE LAHORE 0862), NAD HAD ASKED THAT SEIZED OPIUM HELD IN DISTRICTS BE PLACED IN DISTRICT TREASURIES RATHER THAN COURTS TO FACILITATE ITS SALE. WAHID SAID THIS REQUEST MET WITH CONTEMPT BY PUNJAB E AND T BECAUSE IT SHOWED FUNDAMENTAL IGNORANCE OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS REGARDING HANDLING OF SEIZED OPIUM. REQUEST WAS SENT BACK TO ISLAMABAD WITH WHAT APPARENTLY WAS LEGAL BRIEF ON HOW IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN MADE IN FIRST PLACE. WAHID HAD LITTLE BETTER TO SAY ABOUT POLICE, AND SNEERED AT ASGHAR KHAN'S ANTI-SMUGGLING UNIT AS POLITICAL PALIATIVE WHICH WOULD YIELD NO RESULTS. SMUGGLING, HE SAID, HAD NO REAL EFFECT ON PRICES IN PAKISTAN AS PPP WAS TRYING TO MAKE OUT, BECAUSE IF IT HAD, PRICES WOULD HAVE RISEN IN 1947 SINCE SMUGGLING IS RELATIVELY NO HIGHER NOW THAN IT WAS THEN. PRICE DIFFERENTIALS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN WERE CAUSE, AND THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN APPROXIMATELY

SAME DIFFERENCE. ONLY CHANGE HAS BEEN RECENT RISE IN GOLD PRICE IN PAKISTAN WHICH HAD RESULTED IN SOME REVERSAL OF NORMAL PATTERN OF MOVEMENT OF THIS ITEM ACROSS PAK-INDIAN BORDER.

8. COMMENT: SIX MONTHS AFTER VISIT OF U.S. TEAM, AND THREE MONTHS AFTER RETURN OF CHAIRMAN ORAKZAI FROM U.S VISIT, NONE OF SOURCES HERE HAD HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT ANY PLANS TO FORM PROVINCIAL NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARDS (MENTIONED IN ISLAMABAD REFTELS) WHICH MIGHT HELP IMPROVE COORDINATION OF VARIOUS AGENCIES CONCERNED, AND NONE EXPRESSED FEELING THEY UNDER ANY PRESSURE STEP UP THEIR ANTI-NARCOTICS ACTIVITIES WITH EXCEPTION MUMTAZ ALI. ALL CONSTANTLY EXPRESSED THOUGHT THAT "REAL PROBLEM" IS NEED FOR USG TO GIVE EXTENSIVE AID TO POPPY GROWERS TO STOP PRODUCTION OR DO MORE INSIDE U.S. TO ELIMINATE DEMAND.
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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